

VZCZCXYZ0006
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHDG #0051/01 0362003
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O R 052003Z FEB 10
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0723
INFO RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RHEHWSR/WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIUU/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUEHBH/AMEMBASSY NASSAU
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 0025
RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 0088
RUEHWN/AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

UNCLAS SANTO DOMINGO 000051

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [AMED](#) [SMIG](#) [AEMR](#) [AORC](#) [HA](#) [DR](#)

SUBJECT: GODR Health Assistance Following Haiti Earthquake

REF: A) SDO 156, B) SDO 15, C) SDO 45

11. Summary: On 04 Feb 2010, the Dominican Public Health Ministry (SESPAS) provided the Embassy statistics indicating that 50,647 people have received some kind of medical attention (29,467 vaccinated, plus 21,180 others) in the "framework" of the GoDR's "Contingency Plan to Help Haiti." SESPAS had previously publicly stated that over 30,000 people had received medical attention in the Dominican Republic since the 12 Jan 2010 earthquake. However, these statistics apparently include those assisted by the many international medical volunteers working in the DR and the border region. Finally, there are signs GODR authorities wish to wind down the U.S. and internationally staffed "Good Samaritan" medical facility's operations in Jimani, as well as to move more Haitians back to one or more places within Haiti. End Summary.

12. According to figures provided by the Public Health Ministry to the Embassy on 04 Feb 2010, a total of 29,467 people had received vaccinations of various sorts (e.g., for diphtheria and tetanus) and another 13,612 had received "medical attention" from "mobile units" by 25 January. Another 848 had had "mental health consultations." Slightly more updated figures (as of 03 Feb) were available regarding the number of people who had been hospitalized at some point: A total of 6,720 had received "medical attention" in hospitals, according to SESPAS. However, by 04 Feb 2010, just 633 persons remained hospitalized in "health facilities of the Public Health Ministry," said SESPAS. Of those, 225 are reported to be at the camp in Fond Parisien, Haiti (reftels A - C). The next largest group (129) is at the "Good Samaritan" medical facility in Jimani, where there is also a 26-bed municipal hospital or clinic. (Note: In Fond Parisien, the facility is a field hospital, with over 200 injured Haitians, located on the property of a faith-based NGO called "Love a Child." It is managed by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative. As for the Good Samaritan facility in Jimani, it is actually a make-shift facility established in a previously empty building, and staffed mostly by American and international medical volunteers from various non-governmental entities. At the same time, USAID has been providing some support to the Good Samaritan facility, including the delivery of 118 bed frames and mattresses, two trucks and a mini-bus for transporting patients and two large tents for storing medical supplies and for a commercial kitchen to be used once free food service from the GoDR ends. End Note)

13. A few days earlier, Public Health Minister Bautista Rojas Gomez announced the immediate disbursement of 160,000,000 pesos (USD 4,384,000) to refurbish hospitals along the border. Among the

hospitals to receive funds are San Bartolome in Neyba, Elio Fiallo in Pedernales and a hospital in the town of Galvan. He also reported that the Dominican Government (GoDR) has spent over 428,000,000 pesos (USD 11,725,000) to care for victims of the earthquake. According to data received from SESPAS, the money was spent on medicines, fuel and transport, and medical equipment (e.g., ventilators, autoclaves, portable x-ray machines, hospital beds, sheets and blood products), to "reinforce intensive care units." (Comment: There were no reports just after the earthquake that medical facilities, unlike a few schools, were damaged. It is not surprising, however, that refurbishment or additional equipment might be needed. End Comment)

¶4. Rojas also acted promptly to undercut sensationalist press coverage following the death from bacterial meningitis of a Dominican pastor who helped build shelters in Haiti. He explained that no additional cases of meningitis had yet been discovered, even among the individuals who had accompanied the pastor in Haiti, and that, as a precaution, he had placed the border region on epidemiological alert. Additional measures being taken include: monitoring the eight doctors who treated the pastor and providing anti-malarial drugs to all patients who come from Haiti (although malaria season has yet to arrive). Health workers potentially exposed to the blood of patients are receiving anti-HIV prophylaxis treatment. Meanwhile, U.S. agencies and other assistance organization are also taking measures to minimize the risk of malaria and tetanus.

¶5. The Health Minister gave instructions a week or so ago to Dominican medical facilities that they should not discharge patients too quickly after surgeries, so as to minimize subsequent infections. However, SESPAS has now decided to put an end to new surgeries and admittances to the Good Samaritan facility and Dominican migration authorities are pressuring the Good Samaritan staff to move out the family members that are lingering by their patients. That hospital planned voluntarily moving 60 to 100 Haitians to an American Refugee Commission camp site in Fond Parisien (which is in a field adjacent to the Good Samaritan) on 04 Feb 2010. Meanwhile, media reports also indicate that thousands of Haitians who have undergone amputations need longer-term assistance, first to survive and then to be rehabilitated as much as possible. Mental health services are also lacking at the present time in the border region. These challenges are in addition to the growing one of finding or establishing shelter for those patients who no longer need to be in hospital, but lack somewhere to go.

¶6. (SBU) COMMENT: There is no question but that the GoDR and many Dominicans have "stepped up to the plate" to assist Haitian and other victims of the earthquake, as have the U.S. Government and many governments, NGOs and individuals from around the world. The total number of persons (i.e., 50,647) assisted, per SESPAS, in the context of what Dominicans call the "Contingency Plan to Help Haiti," is impressive but apparently includes those assisted by the many international medical volunteers working in the DR and the border region. Also, it is not clear to Post exactly when and where all the 29,467 vaccines were administered. END COMMENT.

¶7. Minimize Considered.
Lambert